

**Thomas MacLaren State Charter School
Board of Directors Meeting
September 27, 2018
Minutes**

APPROVED

The meeting took place at Thomas MacLaren School, 1702 North Murray Boulevard, Colorado Springs, CO 80915.

- I. **Call to Order:** Mr. Edwards called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m.
 - A. **Roll Call:** Present: Mr. Sam Edwards, Mrs. Melissa Nussbaum, Mr. Tim Seibert, and Mr. Paul von Boeck. Mrs. Hannah Parsons arrived at 4:09 p.m. Mrs. Diane Borre attended via phone. Mr. Tim Fuller was not in attendance. Also present were Mrs. Mary Faith Hall, Executive Director, Mr. Nico Alvarado, Head of Lower School, Mrs. Katherine Brophy, Director of Communications, Mrs. Angie Stattman, Business Manager, Mrs. Kari Coleman, Executive Assistant to Executive Director, Mrs. Debra Richards, Executive Assistant to Head of Lower School, Mrs. Joy Oram, Director of Community Engagement, Mrs. Deanna Finch, Administrative Assistant and Mr. Eric Hall, Founder. Three staff members from the Charter School Institute as well as two MacLaren parents were also in attendance.
 - B. **Public Comment:** None.
 - C. **Approval of Agenda:** Motion to amend agenda to postpone Board Training until next month and add a time for updates from the CSI staff members. Mrs. Nussbaum motioned, Mr. Seibert seconded. Unanimous approval.
 - D. **Approval of Minutes:** Mr. Seibert motioned, Mrs. Nussbaum seconded. Unanimous approval of the August minutes.

- II. **Accountability and Accreditation Obligations**
 - A. **Audit Report:** Tom Sistaire of Hoelting and Co. presented his company's findings from our annual audit. Mr. Sistaire distributed copies of the audit to all Board members and commenced in explaining how he and his co-workers performed this audit. He took the Board through the highlights of the audit, explaining the different statements and noting differences between last year and this year. There is nothing of great concern in the management letters and no material weaknesses or deficiencies. Everything went very well, as it has in years past. Tom's company gave MacLaren an unmodified (clean) opinion. Mr. Sistaire honored Mrs. Stattman and her staff again for being so easy to work with. Mr. Seibert also honored her and her staff for a job well done.

- III. **Student Performance**
 - A. **Lower School:** Mr. Alvarado gave an update to the Board on how the first six weeks of school have been going in the Lower School. He spoke about how the curriculum is set up and how it dovetails nicely with the Upper School curriculum. He noted that they are building a culture in the Lower School that is very similar to that of the Upper School and the students are embracing it. He is finding it very gratifying to

finally be able to prepare children from a young age for our Upper School program and be able to serve the neighborhood where we are now permanently residing.

IV. Board Training

A. Board Module Training: This has been postponed until the next Board Meeting.

V. Update from the Charter School Institute (CSI)

A. Announcements: One of the CSI representatives spoke about their visit today which is part of the charter renewal process. He and his co-workers enjoyed seeing the changes with the new campus and the addition of the Lower School. He mentioned that we are on track for our charter renewal. In October, Mrs. Hall and Mr. Alvarado will be presenting at the Regional CSI Meeting in Colorado Springs. The MacLaren Board of Directors is invited to attend, but not required to be there. The CSI Board will then act on that renewal at their December meeting. The CSI representative went on to talk about some of the different initiatives that they are working on at the state house. Mr. Seibert asked several questions about how CSI works at the state level and what issues might be a concern for CSI schools in the year to come. They said it is too early to tell. Both gubernatorial candidates support charter schools, so that bodes well for us.

VI. Status Reports

A. Head of School: Mrs. Hall noted that this is the highest mobility we have seen between the first day of school and Count Day. We think we will end up with 820 enrolled students and we budgeted for 815. Finances look healthy. A grant renewal was submitted to CDE. Unfortunately, our College Counselor had to resign and so we are looking for another one. Last year's counselor is filling in until we can hire a new counselor. We have a clearer sense of the K-12 staff that we need now that the school has been up and running for 6 weeks. Mrs. Hall mentioned that she and Mr. Alvarado met with a representative of the Great Hearts Foundation, learning more about what they are doing regarding getting more qualified liberal arts trained teachers. Mrs. Hall reminded the Board of the upcoming MacLaren Society event on October 21 and that we will be highlighting our 10th anniversary during this series of events. Some of the students were treated to a performance on September 14 during 3rd hour by the soloists that were going to be performing with the Colorado Springs Philharmonic that evening. It was a real treat for the students and staff! Mrs. Hall finished her report with the announcement of the formation of the MacBoard Outlook group. She would like the Board to use these school email addresses for official business.

B. Dashboard: Mrs. Hall noted that the numbers on the Dashboard are pre-Count Day. The FRL and minority numbers are moving in the right direction. We are almost done with the screenings and identification of students that qualify for Gifted and Talented programming and English Language Learner programming.

C. Finance Committee:

a. August Financial Statements: Mrs. Stattman presented the statements to the Board. She noted that we are waiting for grant funds to be released and that when we receive those funds, we will rectify the negative balance that is currently on our statement. We expect a healthy bottom line.

VII. Policy Review

- A. SY18-19.1 Parent Notification of Employee Conduct:** This was the Board's second discussion regarding this state statute. We are required by CSI to adopt this policy as it is now state law. The Board will do that, but a lengthy and involved discussion ensued regarding the merits of attaching the Objection Resolution that Mrs. Nussbaum had crafted with the advice of Mr. Hall. In the end, the Board put forth two motions for a vote:

MOTION: To approve Policy SY18-19.1

Mr. Seibert motioned, Mr. von Boeck seconded. Unanimous approval

MOTION: To postpone a decision on the Objection Resolution.

Mr. Seibert motioned, Mr. von Boeck seconded.

Yea votes: Mrs. Parsons, Mr. Seibert, Mr. von Boeck.

Nay vote: Mrs. Nussbaum

Mr. Seibert noted that he is willing to contact the bill sponsors to address the Board about this statute. He also asked CSI to offer legal background as well.

- B. SY18-19.3 and 4 Upper & Lower School Enrollment Policy Updates:** Mrs. Hall explained the genesis of these updates. In the Upper School policy, we received pushback from CSI because we do diagnostic testing before the Lottery. Our attorney and the CSI attorney do not agree on the reading of the law in this instance. We have changed our policy to reflect what CSI is requiring of us: to do our testing after the Lottery. We have also clarified how the tiers of preferences work after the Lottery so that parents understand how the waitlist is affected.

In the Lower School policy, we have increased the weight that is given to children who qualify for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch (FRL). It has gone from 3:1 to 5:1. We have also removed the 40% FRL language in 4.b. We have not gotten complete agreement on this from CSI, so if they require a change, we will have to reapprove this policy via phone during a Special Board Meeting.

MOTION: To approve the Upper School Enrollment Policy as presented.

Mr. Seibert motioned, Mrs. Nussbaum seconded. Unanimous approval

MOTION: To approve the Lower School Enrollment Policy, amending 4.b., striking all verbiage after the word "level".

Mr. Seibert motioned, Mrs. Parsons seconded. Unanimous approval

VIII. Announcements

- A. Board Meet and Greet with Faculty/Staff:** October 25 from 3:30-4:15 p.m.
B. Next Regularly Scheduled Meeting: October 25 at 4:30 p.m. (note later start time)
C. Annual Board Retreat: November 10 at Colorado College. More details will follow.

IX. Adjournment

- A. Motion to Adjourn:** Motioned by Mrs. Nussbaum, seconded by Mr. Seibert. Unanimous approval. Adjourned at 5:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Katherine A. Brophy, Minutes Recorder

Date