



MANATEE SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES, inc
3700 32nd Street West
Bradenton, Florida 34205

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
4 April 2017

ATTENDANCE:

OFFICERS: DIRECTORS:

Rany Clark, Principal
Mary Hurt, VP/Treasurer
Jim Brand, Secretary

Andy Gregory, Director
Cheri Lopez, Dir/Parent Liaison
Geena Gregory, Teacher Rep

STAFF:

Richard Ramsay, Principal
Linda Brand, Recorder

OTHERS PRESENT:

Jesse Tilden, School Council
Damen Walpole, Board Candidate
Theresa Nunes, Board Candidate

GUESTS:

Angela Parker (Request to address Board)

1. Meeting called to order at 3:20 PM on 4 April 2017/President Clark
2. President Clark introduced the two board candidates, who in turn gave a brief summary of their individual backgrounds. Both appear to be excellent choices for the Board of Directors' positions.
3. Following a motion by Mr. Brand to accept the February Board Minutes as written, Ms. Hurt seconded and it was unanimously carried.
4. **OLD BUSINESS:** The Board continued the Parent Liaison issue, which was "tabled" during the previous meeting in February. Initially, an item was brought to the attention of the Board during the February meeting regarding certain actions/comments by the Director/Parent Liaison. President Clark had "tabled" the issue in order to procure more detailed information prior to a full discussion by the board at this meeting.
 - a. It was noted that Ms. Lopez, who did not attend the regular board meeting in February, stated that she had an issue with the comment that was noted during the meeting concerning negative comments made by her. She insisted that these comments were not made. Miss Gregory (Teacher Liaison) confirmed that the teacher with whom Ms. Lopez had spoken to, came to her (Ms. Gregory) to tell her,

at which time she immediately reported this to Mr. Ramsay. She was not certain exactly on which day the comment was made, but it had been brought to her attention prior to the last board meeting.

- b. Ms. Lopez stated that she felt she was “looking out” for the school’s best interest as well as the students’ even though she had issues with the way and manner in which the school was being operated. At this point Mr. Gregory politely asked Ms. Lopez whether or not she would be able to give 100% support to the school and the Administration. Her reply indicated that she could give the support to the school, but not to the Administration.*
- c. Mr. Gregory then asked if there was inappropriate language used by her (in the hallway) after a particular meeting. Ms. Lopez admitted that yes, she had.*
- d. At this point, all being said, Mr. Gregory requested that the Board Members allow Ms. Lopez the opportunity to resign as the Parent Liaison and board member.*
- e. President Clark then asked Ms. Lopez if she was prepared to resign at this time to which she replied “no, I will not resign.”*
- f. Following a discussion by board members and Ms. Lopez, Mr. Clark reminded Ms. Lopez when he met with her he made it clear that the Parent Liaison position is intended to be a point of contact for parents so their concerns can and will be heard. The next step is obviously to meet with the Principal, and in the event the issue(s) cannot be resolved at that level, the issue or concern should be elevated to board level through proper channels.*
- g. President Clark then asked each board member if he/she had questions or concerns. Mr. Brand did have concerns and would certainly like to hear from Mr. Tilden, School Counsel in regard to them.
 - (1) Mr. Tilden advised the board that they may certainly remove a board member by vote with or without cause. The board must be able to work cohesively in the best interests of the school and its students at all times.*
 - (2) Mr. Tilden by virtue of his position as School Counsel, is available to assist as well as answer important board questions whenever necessary.**
- h. President Clark requested Mr. Ramsay’s input: Mr. Ramsay feels that the board should request that she resign or, if necessary, call for a vote to remove her from the Board of Directors and her position as Parent Liaison. He requires extremely positive support as well as influence from this important position for the welfare of the school and its parents. He feels that Ms. Lopez is unable to fulfill this*

obligation specifically after hearing about and reading some of the comments she has made.

- i. President Clark then entertained such a motion, which was made by Mr. Gregory; seconded by Mr. Brand and ended in a tie vote (incumbent was allowed to vote). As President of the Board, which allows his vote to break the tie, President Clark voted in favor of removing Ms. Lopez from these positions.*
 - j. President Clark, board members and Mr. Tilden thanked Ms. Lopez for her service as a board member and although she was allowed to remain until the end of the meeting, she chose to leave.*
 - k. Mr. Gregory addressed the board, board candidates and the guest that having a child in the school and serving on the Board of Directors could be extremely difficult at times. A parent serving as a board member must be able to separate this position from parent issues. This board is designed in its makeup to ensure all decisions made are in the best interests of the students, staff and faculty. If even one member acts out of context or says something negative toward any person, the school or its programs, it will be reflected on the entire Board of Directors. We, as a board, need to establish and put into effect a clear, concise policy that outlines the manner and method on how a parent approaches the Parent Liaison and when it becomes necessary to elevate it to the level of the Board of Directors.*
 - l. Mr. Gregory then asked if this board was 100% in support of the school and its administration. One member did indicate 100% for the children and school, but could not honestly provide 100% support for Administration. Mr. Gregory's response was "if a board member cannot support Administration, they do not belong on the board." There must be a clear and concise line drawn on exactly how a parent who is a board member conducts themselves and how their conduct and behavior is perceived. As a parent it is quite simple; follow the same rules and guidelines as every other parent at this school if and when you have a complaint.*
 - m. It is worthy to note that after a brief discussion, Mr. Ramsay and the board member agreed to meet and work out any differences or issues that may be occurring.*
- 5. Parent Angela Parker addressed the Board of Directors with several concerns she had with the school:*
- a. To begin with, Mrs. Parker indicated that she is concerned that Mr. Ramsay has advised her on numerous occasions that her children have experienced an excessive number of absences as well as excessive tardiness, which is definitely affecting their grades. Mr. Ramsay had also informed Mrs. Parker that her children could not have any further absences or he will be required by school*

policies to remove them from Manatee School of Arts and Sciences and place them in their respective zoned district school.

- b. Mrs. Parker informed the board that her children are twins and they seem to both get sick at the same time. Mr. Gregory asked Mrs. Parker if she has contacted the school (as indicated in the parent handbook) every time her children are absent. In reply, Mrs. Parker admitted that she has not done this.*
- c. Mrs. Parker further noted that when she does bring notes to the school from the doctor in the event her children did not return to school on the day noted on the doctor's release, the school does call her to find out why they are not in school. Mrs. Parker said she was advised that she needs a doctor's note for every absence from now on. This is also noted in the student code of conduct published by Manatee County, which MSAS must follow.*
- d. President Clark inquired of Mrs. Parker in regard to the health of her children and advised her "first and foremost" the board and the school are concerned and would like for her children's health to improve. Mrs. Parker answered that she is trying but her children continue to become ill.*
- e. It was brought to the attention of the board that one of her children apparently stays up all night playing video games and then cannot get up in the morning. Mrs. Parker admitted that this does occur and that her child has insomnia and cannot sleep at night. It was suggested that Mrs. Parker seek medical help and remove all electronic equipment from his possession at night. The board made it clear that they certainly are not medical professionals in any sense of the word, and these comments are merely suggestions. President Clark reminded Mrs. Parker that it is the law for every child to be in school and that every school has a responsibility to monitor attendance to prevent truancy. He is surprised that the Truant Office has not already become involved.*
- f. Mrs. Parker advised the board that her child has the worst case of dyslexia that one of the doctors has ever seen and the school refuses to provide him the accommodations he requires. Further, Mr. Ramsay had told the Social Services, according to Mrs. Parker, that he does not receive or qualify for services at this school. Mr. Ramsay informed the board that he and the County ESE Specialist (Exceptional Student Education) had met with Mrs. Parker last year and advised her "first and foremost" her child had to be in school and could not miss more than 10% of his school year (at that point in time, her child had already missed 40 plus days of school) to be considered for testing.*
- g. There is a lengthy process to follow in order to start services on a child, and those processes cannot be initiated or continued if a child is not in school. Mrs. Parker was also advised that the County maintains a County ESE Team to do all their*

testing. Ms. Rawls, a member of the ESE Team called Mrs. Parker last week to address these same issues, and to date Mrs. Parker's son has missed 34 days and has excessive tardy days. For this reason her son cannot qualify for and is not receiving special services. Mr. Ramsay reported that he in fact had told Mrs. Parker that he will not falsify a document. Mrs. Parker pointed out for some reason, that she and her children are terrified of Mr. Ramsay and she finds him bullish and intimidating. The only reason she has not moved her children to a different school is because her children love this school and they will not let her move them.

h. President Clark thanked Mrs. Parker for her time and comments, and assured her that the board heard her concerns "loud and clear."

6. TREASURER'S REPORT: (Ms. Hurt/Mr. Ramsay)

a. The P/L reflects a net income of \$17,543.47

b. It was noted that all bank accounts have been reconciled

c. There is no change on the status of Fixed Assets

d. There were no capital purchases during the month

e. It was noted that there was one transfer of funds during the month; one for \$2,070 transferred from the Extended Day Program account to the Operating Account to provide for Extended Day payroll.

f. Ms. Hurt made a motion, seconded by Mr. Brand and carried, to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented.

7. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT: (Mr. Ramsay)

a. The student count as of April 2017 is 142

b. Mr. Ramsay informed the board that the Registrar Mrs. Brand, had provided several names of students who have excessive attendance issues to him and that he and Mrs. Brand were contacting and meeting with all the parents on the list. As of today, 13 out of 17 families have been contacted. The issue is....all the students' academics are affected by their attendance and we cannot provide a proper education if students are not in attendance. These are the same parents who blame the school when their child brings home an unsatisfactory report card or is not recommended for promotion.

c. It was noted that the Extended Day Program continues to fair very well.

- d. On 7 April 2017, the school is scheduled for a student early release, and all staff for a professional development day.*
 - e. The FSA Reading Test will be administered to the 4th and 5th grade students during the week of 10 April.*
 - f. All FSA test dates will be put in the Parent Memo and included on the website.*
 - g. 14 April is a holiday and the school will be closed.*
 - h. The school is still in the process of trying to find someone to fill the open position for 1-3 Social Studies, Science and PE Instructor. Many applicants are interested in the position for the upcoming year, but are respectfully not willing to leave their school this close to the end of the year.*
 - i. Mr. Gregory made a motion, seconded by Mr. Brand and carried, to accept the Principal's Report as presented.*
- 8. TEACHER LIAISON REPORT: (Ms. Gregory) The teachers asked Ms. Gregory to thank the Board of Directors for the additional supplies that were approved at the last board meeting and purchased using fundraiser money.**
- 9. PARENT LIAISON: No report at this time.**
- 10. GENERAL DISCUSSION:**
- a. President Clark asked Mr. Ramsay to be prepared to give the board the budget proposal for FY18 at the next meeting, which will be held on 25 April. The budget and the slating of the officers will be voted on at the May annual meeting.*
 - b. Mr. Brand was asked by the board to meet with Mr. Ramsay in order to formulate and write policies and procedures for the Parent Liaison and Parent Grievance guidelines.*
 - c. Mrs. Nunes and Mr. Walpole are interested in being elected to the board, and the vote will be taken at the 25 April board meeting.*
 - d. Two board meeting notices have been posted in the Bradenton Herald as mandated in the by-laws.*
- 11. NEW BUSINESS:**

- a. *Mr. Ramsay briefed the board regarding next year's plans to put in a garden as part of the science curriculum. The school has been contacting local businesses and looking for grants. Mr. Ramsay would like the board to consider approving \$2,000 for the school to buy the supplies required to get started now since we want everything ready at the beginning of the school year. There was a brief discussion and a motion was made by Mr. Brand, seconded by Ms. Hurt and carried, to approve the expenditure for the garden project.*
- b. *Mr. Ramsay discussed the hours of operation for next school year with his staff, and would like to increase the school day by 30 minutes.*
- c. *Mr. Ramsay informed the board the teachers had requested to make all Wednesdays full days next year as well.*

12. Mr. Brand made a motion, seconded by Ms. Hurt and carried, to adjourn the meeting at 5:10 PM. The next meeting is scheduled for 25 April 2017 at 3:15 PM.

RANDY CLARK
President

JIM BRAND
Secretary

RICHARD RAMSAY
Principal

LINDA BRAND
Recorder