



RMAE Board of Directors MEETING

Date: 11-07-13 6:30pm

LOCATION: Rocky Mountain Academy of Evergreen, Admin Building, Evergreen, CO

RMAE Vision Statement: RMAE envisions a community of parents, teachers, students and educational and business leaders working together to create a learning environment that encourages growth in character, academic achievement and the love of learning, resulting in responsible, productive citizens.

RMAE Mission Statement: RMAE inspires each student to pursue personal and academic excellence through an intellectually challenging Core Knowledge™ curriculum within a nurturing environment.

Meeting Minutes

Document Revision: 12-11-13

Document Approval: 12-12-13

Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance 6:35 pm
Reading of Vision & Mission

BOD Members in Attendance:

Ned Parker, President, Parent Representative
Aaron Lessig, Vice President, Parent Representative
Thomas Seybold, Treasurer, Parent Representative
Dana Price, Secretary, Parent Representative
Christine Riedlin, Teacher Representative (arrived 7:09 p.m.)
Kristen LaJoy, Community Representative
Jamie Price, Parent Representative
Dan Cohen, Director

BOD Members Absent:

Seth Anderson, Parent Representative

Others in Attendance: Dina Walton, Anita Hanson, Kelli Anderson, Cherie Mazurek, Cheryl Hadsell, Stephanie Seybold, Alan Schiek, Pamela Rohal, Tim Lane, Courtney College, Ingrid Palmer & Chance Palmer

*Bob Fiore has resigned from the BOD effective November 1, 2013. The BOD thanks Bob for his time and commitment. There is now an open parent representative seat available. The BOD can appoint a new member.

Public Comment: Cheryl asked about the scheduling of the BOD meetings and RMAE's Grievance Policy? She has been unable to find it on the website. Dan stated Staff would refer to the Staff Handbook and parents would refer to the Family Handbook.

Ned stated BOD meetings are typically scheduled for the 2nd Thursday of each month. This meeting date is an exception.

Consideration of Consent Agenda

The Board discussed the summarization of the 10/24/13 minutes. Minutes will be brought back in December for approval after edits.

Committee Reports

AAA: Cheryl Hadsell presented:

- Definition of AAA established
- Attendance requirements
- Constructed a list of AAA responsibilities & dates
- Avoiding surprises for the RMAE community

- Binders for members (concise, all in one place, easy reference)
- Communication is very important
- Would like to know about the Grievance Policy – it should be discussed more than once per year with parents/staff
- See themselves as the Ambassadors of the School – positive feedback
- Some terms need to be clarified as far as plans & reports with Dina and when they need to be submitted
- Core Knowledge – status
- Next meeting, Monday, November 18
 - 6 months behind in submitting to the BOD the AAA goals for this academic school year
 - Still in the process of reviewing the Annual Survey from 2012-2013 and reporting on

Jamie reminded the BOD about the discussion at our last meeting surrounding a Climate Survey for mid-year before another SOS meeting. It will most likely happen in January for this academic year, but following this year it should be late November or early December.

Financial: Dina Walton presented

- Bingo begins on Saturday, Nov 9. Would love BOD members to volunteer. There is one session on Saturday afternoons from 1-5 pm. Seven years old and above can play and 8th graders can work it. Researching babysitting. Managers/Callers are needed. Last year Bingo raised \$41,000 after a year and a half.
- On Oct. 14, sent out 209 letters requesting payment of outstanding registration fees; today there are only 84. Some Socio Economic forms were filled out as well.
- Committee is trying really hard to find a plowing company, 2 are considering.
- Auditor is coming on 12/12/13 to discuss his finds report.
- 2008 Bonds have been arbitrated. We do not owe any money to the government.
- New Budget to be presented at next BOD meeting – Amendment 66 did not pass.
- Working with the Marketing committee on the National School Choice week, which is at the end of January 2014.

RMAE Foundation: Kelli Anderson presented

- Annual Giving - \$46,960 committed; \$27,140 collected; 49 families participated so far, students 73. It has flattened since the SOS meeting. About 20% of students participating and 20% of our goal.
- Positive message needs to come from the BOD about the climate of the school for the Foundation to move forward. Director is the face of the school, utilize the “Director’s take” for positive messaging as well.
- Nora Flood is a good resource.
- Annual Giving follow up needs to begin i.e. phone call, emails, etc. Foundation to facilitate.
- Discussed the Long-Term Sustainable Webinar: Moving forward with creating a sustainable giving fundraising plan with the Marketing committee.
- Communication is a key factor for RMAE.

Marketing: Dana Price presented

- Foundation is at the point where they can begin posting Annual Giving online. Families have been given the option to be anonymous if they want.
- Working on an Alumni Program Plan – Association, Reunions, Database, Fundraising, etc.
- Bring students into the communication realm. Utilize students through interviews; have them speak during School Choice assembly giving positive messages about RMAE.
- Charter & Charter Renewals will be going on the website under BOD Governance.
- Changing “A Public Charter School” to “A Core Knowledge Public Charter School.”
- “Where are they now?” MS Elective to be revisited.
- Lisa is trying to organize the website in a better format.
- Calendar of events, volunteer opportunities is up and running.
- In the process of creating a long-term sustainable fundraising plan.

- Will be uploading a virtual bulletin board for teacher needs and wish lists (“Giving Tree”). Both internal and external (outside businesses) options.
- School Choice week
- Marketing program for Bingo
- Bluegrass Festival moving forward. Saturday, August 23, 2014 from Noon to 8 pm at Buchanan.

PTO: Anita Hanson presented

- Fundraisers for November – Original Artworks, Book Fair, MS Dec 3 Concert is when the MS kid artwork will be sold at this time and they will have a bake sale at the same time.
- PTO spots still open. School supply kits and President Elect. Dina stated she is doing the School Supply kits.
- Bingo begins on November 9th.

Preschool: no report

Facilities / Tech: Tim Lane presented. (PowerPoint Presentation)

- Our anonymous donor turned in the \$50k check today that was pledged. All money we needed to raise is in for the field.
- GoCO is not funding RMAE therefore we will no longer need the EPRD Joint Use Agreement. There were 49 applications and only 10 projects were awarded.
- Grading Update – the field area is complete & topsoil has been spread. Field should be raked before letting PE on it.
- Received recommendations for soil stabilization. The safety fence will be repositioned to cordon off the field.
- The auxiliary parking area now has a slight slope for drainage purposes. Will consider quotes for recycled asphalt cap so we can pave most of this area and potentially use as a faculty lot.
- The Archeology dig boxes have been moved. They can be temporarily placed by the retention pond and will be replaced for Mr. Reynolds in the spring.
- Budget: Grading came in very close to the \$56K. There was a change order to place dams around 5 trees on the property for \$2K. The flex terra is \$.30 a square foot. Christine asked how short would we be for the turfing. The area needs to be re-measured and options have been offered for cost savings. \$155K is in the bank. After paying bills there will still be roughly \$100K. Items to be considered: fencing, paving the fire road, ADA parking. The committee is very confident the field will be turfed in the spring. There is no agreement with Stingers. There is opportunity for 3rd party agreements. Considering options for funding maintenance costs. MAMFA committed to \$1000. Tim could not commit to a possibly shortage or overage of funds at this time.
- Dina is researching Scheduling Software for field usage.
- Marketing/Advertising/Dedication of the field needs to be discussed.
- Teacher’s perspective: very happy with the safety people that helped out during construction.

Director’s Report: Dan Cohen presented.

- Core Knowledge (CK) update – current schools were going to have to relicense this year. They have been seeking feedback from schools. Licensing generally costs between \$6k-\$18k. All Core Knowledge schools that were designated “Visitation” do not have to go through the relicensing process. At the December or January meeting, Dan will give us more information regarding a higher level of distinction. The higher accreditation tag is “Core Knowledge Schools of Distinction”. Staff needs to continue making their CK domain maps (or plans) going into the academic year. Our teachers need to continue making and utilizing these plans. There is nothing that needs to happen at this point to maintain our current status. Cheryl asked Dan if he wanted AAA to pull the licensing back in to their committee, researching the new distinction, etc. Once he receives more information he will pass it on to AAA for the committee to handle. There is no longer a licensing fee and there is not a timeline for us to adhere to at this time. Within the templates CK sent to RMAE, there are Common Core standards because they are covered in the CK curriculum. Teachers do not complete the topic coverage checklists or tracking lists anymore because the fidelity message is that if you are CK, you are addressing required topics every day. The curriculum map and domain maps would be looked at for tracking how much CK curriculum

is taught. The checklist was not a real objective percentage measure for CK curriculum, but they can still be used as a guide. CK is distinctive for RMAE and a main reason that parents send their children here. This message needs to be continually given to our parents. CK felt that the tool they originally gave to schools was not adequate, so now they have switched to domain maps. CK takes care of state standards for schools now through their program. Certain places like Literacy and Writing, teachers will need to look toward Common Core to see if they are hitting the targets. All CK schools chose their Literacy and Writing textbooks, which are as close to CK as we can be. How we communicate is the most important branding we can do for our school. For the Growl – Common Core & Core Knowledge (Dan). Dan suggested the teachers finish their maps and upload them to the website. Our parent group needs to be aware of the distinction between the two. AAA to come up with a methodology to communicate with parents that we are an active Core Knowledge school and help staff members communicate better with parents utilizing some form of common format.

- UIP including the Culture and Climate goals were submitted at the end of last week with Kim Egan.
- Charter Renewal is bound and completed.

President's Report: Ned Parker presented.

- JCLA (JeffCo Charter Leaders Association) – is starting up again. First meeting is on Nov. 13 at Free Horizon Montessori School at 6 p.m. Historically they were focusing on state funding issues. Bi-monthly meetings. This is a great opportunity to see how other schools work and the diversity in the charter school domain. Perhaps BOD members can take turns attending.

Old Business

- A. Director/Board working relationship: BOD Member concerns: Jamie lead the discussion. Resolution is expected.
- Previous issues continue to come back, but did not all originate from this BOD; acknowledged Kelli Anderson's comments and Jon Tesseo's in his email even though he disagrees with some of the comments.
 - Moving forward, we need to get behind the Strategic Plan and the 4 goals it states.
 - Jamie's main point is the past dysfunctional AAA now replaced with a "healthy" one. There needs to be assurance from the Director that when recommendations are made and the BOD approves them, that the BOD, AAA and the Director will all be on the same page and hold to the decisions made.
 - Ned cautioned: We can go into Executive Session if we meet three criteria:
 1. Stay on the topic that is on the Agenda
 2. It has to be entered for one of several reasons that are mentioned in the Sunshine Law (this may fall under personnel issues)
 3. We have to have 2/3 votes of BOD members
 - He also stated that Dina is very concerned about, as the HR Manager, needing to be in on any Executive Sessions dealing with personnel and point of contact for School Liability. Any comments good/bad need to be filed for the Director's review in the spring. He does not favor going into Executive Session. No binding decisions can be made during Executive Session and therefore Dina does not necessarily need to be present.
 - If things are off track then it does need to be discussed and it shouldn't be for everyone to know about.
 - Dana stated she believed we should motion to go into Executive Session so everyone can freely speak and move forward as a unified team.
 - Jamie stated, as BOD members, we need to be able to do our jobs and therefore healthy discussions/disagreements need to take place without animosity toward or from Director/Staff.
 - Cheryl stated there are policies and conduct codes for our use. As a Board she needs to know we are working with Dan as the Director and have a healthy working relationship and continue to move forward. There is a proper way to file grievances and follow policies.
 - Alan is confident in the current BOD members and their commitment to RMAE.
 - What topics need to be addressed?

- Jamie discussed rumors about BOD members & micromanaging. However, staff, Foundation and others have been trying to micromanage the BOD. Discussion between Jamie and Ned – The Board hired Dan as a seasoned professional and he needs to be respected in that capacity. He owes us respect as a Board in directing policy. We need to listen to teacher concerns, but not direct them directly. Parents have chosen to send their children here and we ask a lot from them; in exchange they expect and deserve to be involved. However, they need to observe the policies in the Family Handbook. There are too many rumors.
- Aaron discussed the broader question of the direction of the school. A lot of the trust issues that developed were because the previous Board did not follow up on issues. The motion was not followed as written. A recommendation that was brought forward by AAA, was supported by the Director and the BOD, and yet was not followed up on. The previous BOD and Administration did not follow through and now parents want to know what happened. There was a governance issue that imploded, no follow through and a trust issue. When no resolution comes from issues such as these you can't move forward. There needs to be a clear understanding of whether or not this will happen again. Is this micromanaging or accountability?
- As the others in attendance tried to add to the discussion, Ned requested that, for timeliness, discussion be between Board members and not become an open forum.
- The topic is systematic of bigger issues.
- Tom commented – the previous BOD approved unanimously to make the changes for Math but they were not implemented. We have a new AAA and the new BOD members are up to speed on the issue. The new AAA needs to pick up where the old committee left off in the spring and make a recommendation. He is not in favor of an Executive Session. We need to stand behind the administration and make sure the recommendations are implemented whether that is considered micromanaging or not.
- Aaron's concerns: Dan's comments regarding him misleading AAA in regards to Math every day and leveling. This created a trust issue. When the Director makes a recommendation he needs to know that it is real.
- Dan began to follow the Board directive, driven by his will to support it even though he believed truly it was wrong for the school. Whatever the time frame has been when this issue really began to grow, whatever he did during this time frame is not indicative of the other 3 ½ - 4 years that he has been here. Dan stated that if the majority of people think something is good for the school and he doesn't, then he is in the minority. He believes he followed what he was supposed to with slight changes. Consider that those 9 months were difficult and there is nothing today that suggests that something like that will occur again. There was not a question of his relationship with previous Boards prior to this incident. What happened was unique, unhealthy and not addressed. He asked 1) consider this was not indicative of what his past has been at this school or any other; 2) there are still items out there related to the former AAA whose behavior as individuals was beyond acceptable. It is not a reflection on the school.
- Aaron explained that, in a town with strong competitors, the perception of RMAE is damaged when AAA makes recommendations that the BOD approves, but isn't followed through on and when aggressive teachers show up at a meeting and berate parents. Dan needs to control staff in a better manner. Aaron is looking for leadership in these situations. It does not help the school. When there is a tough situation on the table, the BOD needs to have accurate information to make an educated decision that will benefit the school and the Director needs to communicate strongly with parents so they have a comfort level with the school.
- Cheryl stated that the Director should have been able to come to the BOD to discuss how to let a parent go from a committee that is no longer a productive part. The previous AAA wasn't dysfunctional. There was great and accurate information that was disseminated poorly. Going forward, is there a proper way to ask someone to step down? There is a policy in place to have a committee member removed. Dan stated he knew that and spoke with the person, but didn't want to go that route.

- Ned stated the topic did come up – can we dismiss a parent volunteer from a subcommittee? The BOD bylaws for standing subcommittees simply refer to the Board Subcommittee Policy Book, a book that doesn't exist according to Ned's research. The BOD's ability to add or subtract subcommittee members is defined under Ad Hoc committees. "Ad Hoc," in a traditional sense, covers the temporary or unplanned/as-needed tasks that come up. For committee work, ad hoc actually means any committee created for a designated task. Thus, standing committees are also ad hoc in this sense. Last spring, we had no confidence to dismiss an individual from a standing subcommittee because of the lack of direct policy.
- Dana commented on the trust issue. Behavior from administration, staff and certain members of AAA was completely unprofessional and some became personal. It is difficult to support someone that cannot maintain a professional demeanor especially when they are in a challenging situation. There were personal comments made by staff members to other parents and personal comments made in staff households that have directly affected one of her children. Moving forward staff must behave in the professional manner that is expected. Any consequences come down to governance. There are multiple letters that were sent directly to the BOD since the beginning of the year that haven't been addressed yet. There needs to be some sort of correspondence acknowledging these families and as a BOD, address the issues.
- Tom asked if any previous BOD members felt any resistance or opposition to those ideas during discussions. Ned addressed this – the recommendation to go to Math five days a week and leveling was about an 18-month process. AAA initially asked for additional staff and a schedule that would be best supported with additional facilities. After several iterations, AAA finally presented a clean proposal the BOD felt they could support. However, at that point, the BOD needed to ask Dan for his opinion, his implementation plan, and check progress – but didn't. By late summer, Dan raised concerns. Tom stated – AAA started with a few recommendations which were denied to due budget/staff constraints, moved forward with Math which wouldn't have an effect and in the end, that didn't get implemented either. Dan insists that what was agreed upon was implemented.
- In December, the BOD will hear from AAA regarding leveling Math in the 6th grade. The 6th grade teachers want the leveling stopped because it has leveled Science, English and History. The Humanities teacher is having difficulties because there is one class that is dynamic and one that is not.
- It's never perfect leveling in a small school.
- Dan needs to address the staff and it is his job to make sure they hold to a high professional standard.

Motion: Ned motioned to endorse Dan as our Director moving forward, Tom seconded.

Approval: 7-0

Abstentions: None

- Alan Scheik/Ned to write a statement for the RMAE community.
- Do we have another State of the School? Discussion for next meeting.

B. Strategic Plan Progress by Topic and BOD Member

- Tabled until our next meeting.

New Business

A. Annual Review of Emergency Procedures Plan

- Dan stated the Emergency Plan is in the back of the Charter Renewal. Immediate evacuation site is the CBE parking lot. If it were a HAZMAT situation, we would get picked up by Jeffco busses and brought to EMS. Look at the evacuation plan and the burn document. If there were a fire we would evacuate to the field. Questions and further discussion for next meeting.

B. Board Training modules (#3, #4, #5, #6)

#3 Promoting the Vision and Mission, #4 Selecting, Reviewing & Supporting the Administrator
#5 Accountability / Program Assessment, #6 Contract Renewal & Accreditation

- Tabled until our next meeting.

Action Items (to be completed at the next Board meeting):

- A. Board Training modules (#9, #10)
 - #9 Board Financial Oversight, #10 Sunshine Law

Board Comment

Next Meeting – December 12, 2013

Adjournment: 10:33 p.m.